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# *Et Partu Fontis Exceptum: The Typology of Birth and Baptism in an Unusual Spanish Image of Jesus Baptized in a Font\**

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## *Abstract*

A capital with an unusual scene of the Baptism of Jesus has recently been excavated in the late twelfth-century cloister of San Juan de la Peña (Huesca). Remarkable for its depiction of a youthful Saviour seated in a footed baptismal font, the image deviates significantly from the traditional Romanesque formula of an adult Jesus baptized in the Jordan River. Examination of this motif's iconographic roots locates it among a small family of similar northern Spanish images, the earliest of which is an illumination in the so-called "Beatus of Gerona," dated A.D. 975.

The unconventional motif of the Baptism in a font seems to have resulted from a deliberate iconographic borrowing, by which an image of the Bath of the Infant Jesus at the Nativity was deliberately recast as a Baptism scene. This borrowing depends in part upon pictorial similarities between the traditional formulas of Bath and Baptism, but it is supported by a venerable ideological typology which links the purification of Christian baptism with that of the natal bath. This typology is echoed in Christian liturgy by the repeated pairing of the Baptism of Jesus with numerous episodes relating to his Nativity, and seems also to have been known elsewhere in Europe, where it inspired scenes which resemble, but are not directly related to, the Spanish group.

Although the specific circumstances which inspired the Spanish Baptism in a font remain unknown, the complex visual and theological foundations on which the motif depends bear witness to the creativity and adaptability of its unknown medieval inventor.

An extraordinary image of the Baptism of Jesus has recently come to light in the late twelfth-century Spanish cloister of San Juan de la Peña (Huesca).<sup>1</sup> The scene appears on a fragmentary double-basket capital which was discovered in the mid-1980s during archaeological excavations at the site, and which is now installed in the reconstructed south gallery of the cloister (Figs. 1–2).<sup>2</sup> Because of its recent discovery, and perhaps also because of its fragmentary state, the Baptism capital has scarcely been mentioned in art historical literature to date.<sup>3</sup> However, closer study of this fragment with its unusual Baptism imagery does prove rewarding, for it reveals the existence of a sophisticated iconographic invention which deviates dramatically from established pictorial traditions, and which would have a brief but significant influence on the Romanesque art of northeastern Spain.

The fragmentary double-basket capital measures 40 × 39 × 38 centimeters at its upper edge, dimensions a good deal reduced from those of the cloister's intact double capitals, which average 40 × 54 × 39 centimeters. This reduction in size is the result of extensive abrasion and losses, primarily on the two short faces, where the sculpted surface has been entirely obliterated.<sup>4</sup> The two longer faces, which contain the main figures of the capital's two narrative scenes,<sup>5</sup> are also damaged, but retain enough sculpted material to be conclusively identified. The more seriously abraded face contains the capital's opening scene, which can be identified as the presentation of the infant Jesus in the Temple (Fig. 1). Here, despite the loss of most surface detail, silhouettes have survived of a square, footed altar and the flanking figures of Mary and Simeon, the former holding a small oval bundle representing the Child, the latter reaching forward to receive it.<sup>6</sup>

The second face of the capital, which survives in better condition, depicts the Baptism of Jesus (Fig. 2). This portrays a youthful, beardless Saviour, clearly identified by a cruciform nimbus, immersed up to the chest in a scalloped, footed baptismal font. To the left are the scanty remains of the figure of John the Baptist, a rocky mass recognizable primarily by the extended hand that rests on Jesus' breast. To the right, portions of a robe and a stream of water falling into the basin of the font suggest the presence of an attendant bearing water for the rite. Finally, a plump dove representing the Holy Spirit perches comfortably atop Jesus' head, confirming the identity of the scene.

The capital is easily placed within the iconographic program of the San Juan de la Peña cloister. Although damage and reconstruction have to some degree disrupted the original sequence of the capitals, the cloister's twelfth-century program can be reconstructed with some certainty, due to its regularly alternating plan and the clearly narrative character of the capitals themselves.<sup>7</sup> A major portion of this program comprises an extensive cycle of the Life of Christ, which includes scenes from the Nativity, Ministry, Miracles and Passion and which follows almost exactly the order of the synoptic Gospels. Within this series, the Presentation/Baptism capital can be placed in the cloister's north range, where it provides a transition between the scenes of Jesus' Infancy and the beginning of his Ministry (Fig. 3).<sup>8</sup>

Most of the iconographic elements in the San Juan de la Peña Baptism are firmly rooted in tradition. The figure of



FIGURE 1. *San Juan de la Peña, cloister, south gallery, east face of double capital: the Presentation in the Temple (photo: author).*



FIGURE 2. *San Juan de la Peña, cloister, south gallery, west face of double capital: the Baptism of Jesus (photo: author).*

John the Baptist and the descending dove, symbol of the Holy Spirit, are of course integral components of the scene, whose presence is required by the narrative.<sup>9</sup> The water-bearing attendant, whose presence is suggested by drapery remains and the fragmentary stream of water, recalls similar attendant figures, such as an urn-bearing angel or personification of the Jordan, which appear in numerous Baptism scenes.<sup>10</sup> Somewhat less common, at least in the twelfth century, is the representation of Jesus as a beardless youth rather than a mature, bearded male. However, although unusual in the later Middle Ages, this is a fairly frequent ingredient in early Christian Baptism scenes, and can be traced to the first surviving representations of the event.<sup>11</sup>

The most intriguing and problematic feature of the scene is the baptismal font in which Jesus is seated. This detail initially might not strike the modern viewer as illogical: indeed, why would a baptismal font *not* be appropriate in a scene of the Baptism of Jesus? However, it is imperative to recognize the rarity with which the medieval Baptism formula has been so modified. As is well known, the conventional formula for the Baptism of Jesus portrays the Saviour standing in the Jordan river, in accordance with Scriptural

accounts of the event. Of the hundreds of medieval examples of the scene which survive today, perhaps only a dozen depart from this formula to depict Jesus baptized in a font or tub.<sup>12</sup> The presence of a font in the San Juan de la Peña Baptism thus must be recognized as a significant abrogation of an otherwise consistent iconographic tradition, for whose abandonment some explanation must be sought.

Few iconographic parallels with the San Juan de la Peña Baptism scene survive at all in medieval imagery. However, several close *comparanda* can be found, all likewise native to Spain. Considered along with the San Juan de la Peña capital, these present a strikingly uniform group which is nearly as consistent in date and provenance as in iconography. With the exception of one earlier work, whose special circumstances will be discussed below, all these examples date to the twelfth century and originated in the far northeastern corner of the Iberian peninsula, within the borders of the newly merged Catalan-Aragonese monarchy known now as the medieval Crown of Aragon.<sup>13</sup> The small number, comparable dates, and relatively limited dispersion of these works allow them to be studied as a coherent group, which seems to have descended from a single, in-



## Hypothetical Reconstruction Using Existing Twelfth and Thirteenth Century Capitals Cloister of San Juan de la Peña

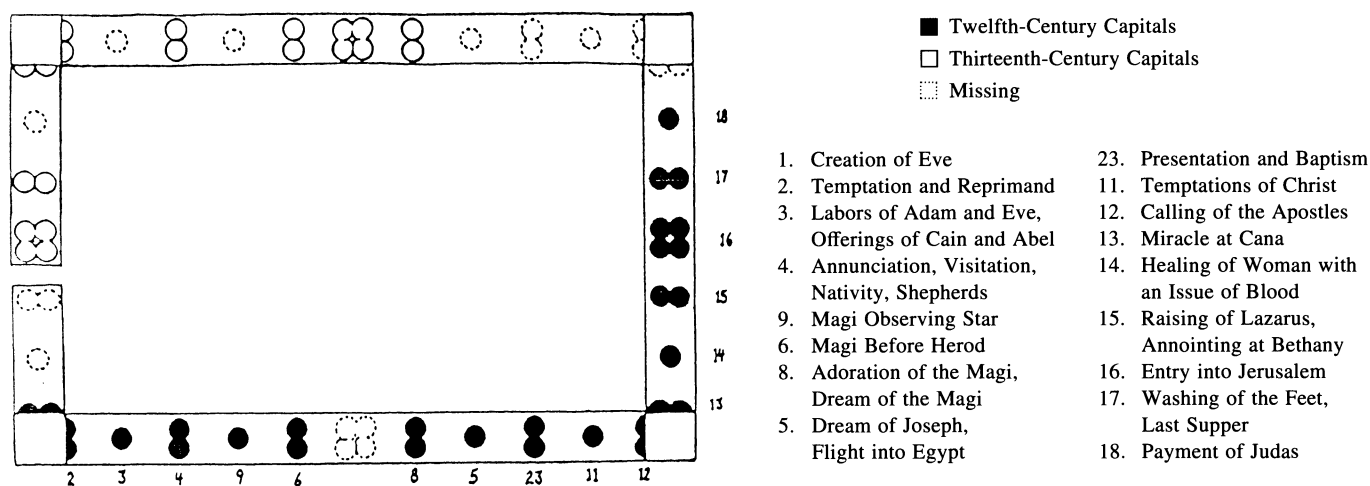


FIGURE 3. Reconstruction diagram of the San Juan de la Peña cloister, showing the original location of the Baptism capital (dwg.: author).

ventive iconographic prototype whose influence upon the art of northeastern Spain was to be potent, if short-lived.

### *Related Romanesque Images of the Baptism in a Font*

One other example of the Spanish Baptism in a font appears, like the San Juan de la Peña scene, in a monumental context. It is found in the late twelfth-century north portal of San Salvador in the Aragonese town of Ejea de los Caballeros (Zaragoza), approximately sixty kilometers southwest of San Juan de la Peña.<sup>14</sup> At Ejea, as in the cloister, the Baptism is part of an extensive cycle of the Life of Christ, which here unfolds on three historiated archivolt above the north door (Fig. 4). Although the surface of the archivolt is now partly obscured by thick, multiple layers of blue and red paint, the sculpted figures beneath have survived largely intact.

Most of the iconographic elements that survive in the San Juan de la Peña Baptism appear in more complete form at Ejea. A youthful, beardless Jesus, cross-nimbed, awaits Baptism in a footed font; the remains of a dove appear above his head. At left, John the Baptist places his hand upon the Saviour's breast in a gesture identical to that in the cloister capital. The most notable difference between the two images is the omission at Ejea of the attendant figure, a discrepancy possibly caused by the spatial limitations of the narrow voussor to whose surface the scene is confined. In spite of this, it is evident that the two Baptism scenes depended upon the same iconographic prototype, for they share the most peculiar and characteristic features of the scene: the youthful, beardless Jesus, and the footed font in which he awaits baptism.



FIGURE 4. Ejea de los Caballeros, San Salvador, third archivolt of the north portal: the Baptism of Jesus (photo: author).

A close stylistic relationship has long been recognized between the portals of Ejea de los Caballeros and the cloister of San Juan de la Peña. The two sites share a similar carving style, marked by large-headed, stocky figures with bulging eyes and graphic, deeply hatched drapery, and indeed have often been attributed to the same anonymous sculptor, the so-called "Master of San Juan de la Peña."<sup>15</sup> The iconographic programs of the two monuments have until recently received little study, but these too can be shown to be closely related. A systematic comparison of the Christological cycle at each site reveals an intimate correlation between the details of individual scenes and the sequence of



FIGURE 5. *The Baptism of Jesus*, Turin Beatus, Turin, National Library, MS I.II.1, fol. 136 (photo: Ampliaciones y Reproducciones Mas [Arxiu Mas]).

the narrative in both works, suggesting that the same prototypical cycle was used as a model for both.<sup>16</sup> This shared model alone would provide a reasonable explanation for the two sites' nearly identical Baptism scenes.

However, an additional example of the Baptism in a font is found in a work with less evident relation to the San Juan de la Peña cloister: an illuminated Catalanian copy of the *Commentary on the Apocalypse* of Beatus of Liébana, produced in or near Gerona in the first half of the twelfth century and now preserved in the National Library of Turin (MS. I. II. 1).<sup>17</sup> Here, the Baptism has been placed within the cycle of Apocalyptic illustrations which traditionally accompany the Beatus text.<sup>18</sup> It is found on the lower half of folio 136, following the *storia*, or excerpted textual passage, of Revelation 14:1–5, an apparently unrelated description of the Adoration of the Lamb on Mount Zion (Fig. 5).<sup>19</sup> As at San Juan de la Peña and Ejea, the Turin Baptism depicts a youthful Jesus in the basin of a footed font, although in this case the figure is not deeply immersed, but protrudes above

the water in an awkward half crouch. The font stands in turn in a Y-shaped form representing the Jordan river and its two tributaries, which are labeled “FONS JOR” and “FONS DAN”; a large fish leaps in the river’s left branch. John the Baptist stands on a mound of earth to the left of the font, his hands resting on Jesus’ abdomen and proper right knee, while above, a dove descends toward the Saviour’s head. At right, an inscription identifies the scene: “UBI XPS ET IOHANNES IN JORDANE FLUMINE TINCTI FUERUNT.”<sup>20</sup>

The Turin Baptism differs somewhat from the two monumental versions of the scene in the slightly altered position of the figure of Jesus in the font, in the inclusion of the Y-shaped Jordan form, and in the presence of inscriptions. These differences might have been due in part to deliberate simplification of the sculpted scenes in response to the restrictions of an architectural setting; it is even possible that some elements, such as the Y-shaped Jordan, might once have appeared on the San Juan de la Peña capital,



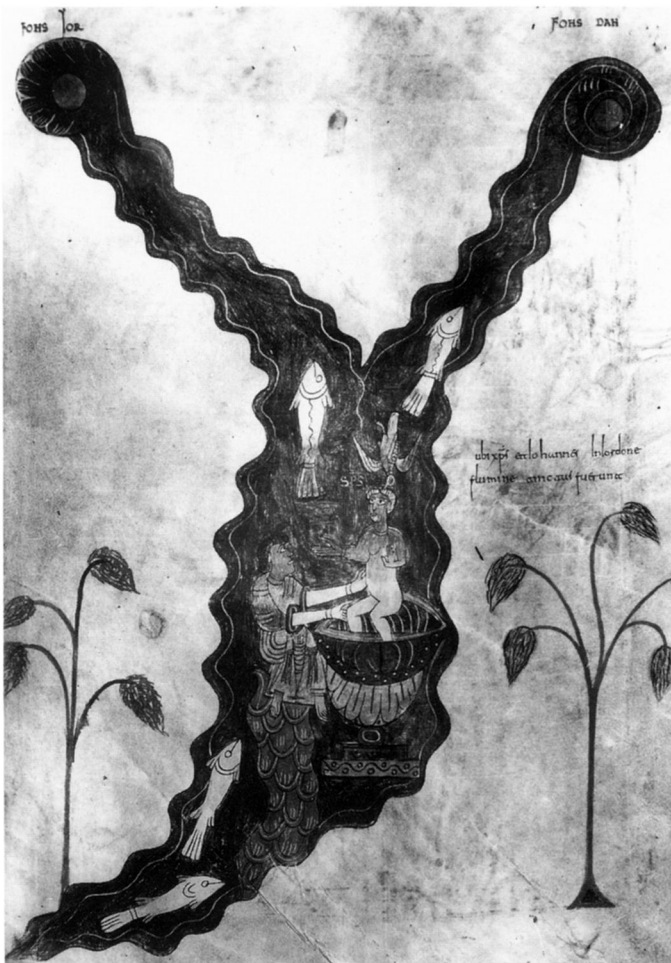


FIGURE 6. *The Baptism of Jesus, Gerona Beatus, Gerona Cathedral, ms lat. 7, fol. 189* (photo: *Ampliaciones y Reproducciones Mas [Arxiu Mas]*).

where much of the original sculpted surface is now lost.<sup>21</sup> Notwithstanding these discrepancies, however, the Turin scene does share with its monumental cousins the two essential elements of the Spanish Baptism in a font—a child-like Jesus and a footed font—and therefore may be placed within the same iconographic family.

Although the Aragonese sites of Ejea and San Juan de la Peña are located at some distance—approximately 300 kilometers—from the Mediterranean city of Gerona, the contemporaneous emergence of the Baptism in a font at all three sites was no doubt fostered by the merging of Catalonia and Aragon into a single political entity through the marriage in 1137 of Ramón Berenguer IV of Barcelona to Petronilla, the infant daughter of Ramiro II of Aragon.<sup>22</sup> In the period surrounding and following this merger, communication among the Aragonese and Catalan monasteries was notably increased: the documentation of San Juan de la Peña itself, one of the kingdom's preeminent monasteries, records repeated contacts with the religious leadership of

Catalonia.<sup>23</sup> This newly cooperative relationship can only have facilitated the movement of artists and works of art between Aragon and Catalonia, perhaps directly among the three sites in question.

#### *An Early Relative in León*

A clue as to the origins of this group of twelfth-century Baptism scenes is offered by a somewhat earlier image which appears in a tenth-century *Beatus Commentary* preserved in the cathedral of Gerona (Gerona, Arch. de la Cat., MS. 7).<sup>24</sup> This codex, apparently created in León, was presumably carried eastward to Gerona no later than 1078, when it was left to the monastery in a will.<sup>25</sup> There, as Carlos Cid and Isabel Vigil have convincingly argued, it seems to have furnished the model for the twelfth-century Turin *Beatus*, with which it displays marked textual and pictorial similarities.<sup>26</sup> The illuminations preserved in the Turin and Gerona codices correlate closely in sequence, in selection, and in iconographic features, as well as in the physical relationship between image and text.<sup>27</sup> This correlation includes a series of Christological scenes which are otherwise unknown in the *Beatus* tradition, among them the peculiar Baptism in a font.<sup>28</sup>

In the Gerona manuscript, the Baptism appears on folio 189, where it occupies the same place within the text as it did in the Turin codex, following the *storia* of Revelation 14:1–5 (Fig. 6). Stylistically, the Gerona illumination differs markedly from the Romanesque miniature in its typically Mozarabic spacelessness, vibrant hues, and tendency toward linear pattern. However, the iconography of the scene compares minutely with that of the Turin image. Once again, a youthful Jesus crouches in a footed font, which this time is adorned with stylized scroll and scallop forms. The Baptist stands at left on a mound of stones, his hands again placed on the abdomen and thigh of the Saviour. A dove descends directly above Jesus' head, and several large fish leap in the Y-shaped waters of the Jordan. A nearly identical inscription identifies the scene and its components.<sup>29</sup> These similarities leave little doubt that the Baptism in the Gerona *Beatus* served as the direct inspiration for the same scene in the Turin manuscript. In this case, the Gerona scene may also be identified as an early relative, perhaps even an ancestor, of the similar Baptism images at Ejea de los Caballeros and San Juan de la Peña.

The *Beatus* of Gerona is dated A.D. 975 by a colophon, which also records the names of its scribe, the monk Senior; its commissioner, the abbot Dominic; and its two artists, the nun Ende (or En) and the monk Emeterius.<sup>30</sup> A scriptorium is not identified, but the work has been plausibly ascribed to León, perhaps to the monastery of San Salvador in Tábara, where Emeterius and Senior are known to have collaborated on an earlier version of the *Beatus Commentary*.<sup>31</sup> The circumstances of the Gerona manuscript's transmission to the cathedral for which it is named remain unknown; Cid

and Vigil have speculated that the codex might have been acquired as part of a general effort by the monastery to increase its library holdings, if not in the course of an individual expedition by one of the canons of the cathedral.<sup>32</sup> Whatever the case, it is clear that the eleventh-century arrival of the Beatus in Gerona was a catalytic event, for little time seems to have elapsed before its illuminations had begun to inspire local imitations.

Indeed, the dissemination of the formula of the Baptism in a font is neither the only nor the earliest case in which the illuminations of the newly-arrived Gerona Beatus were put to use in northeastern Spanish works. Other examples are also known in which imagery from the Gerona codex was apparently adopted by local artisans. The most compelling of these is a relief fragment from the destroyed Romanesque cathedral of Gerona, published by Jaime Marqués Casanovas shortly after its discovery in 1961.<sup>33</sup> The relief bears a pair of Apocalypse scenes clearly related to the Beatus cycle (Fig. 7): in the first, the Whore of Babylon offers a cup to a richly dressed male figure; in the second, she is mounted on the seven-headed beast. As Marqués has observed, the scenes strongly resemble two illuminations from the Beatus of Gerona, which may well have served as their model.<sup>34</sup> A more convincing illustration could hardly be found of the Leonese manuscript's impact upon the art of its new homeland. What is more, the fact that this influence can be found in a sculptural work provides further evidence that the imagery used in the Gerona Beatus did not long remain confined to the scriptorium, but also found its way into monumental art.

The early date of the Gerona Beatus, along with its perfectly timed arrival in Gerona and almost immediate adoption as a model for local, Romanesque works, render it tempting to identify the Gerona Beatus itself as the direct progenitrix of the Baptism in a font in all three of our later Spanish examples. However, this attractive hypothesis is undermined by several small but significant iconographic variations within the Baptism group. For example, the water-bearing attendant that appears in the San Juan de la Peña Baptism is found neither at Ejea de los Caballeros nor in the two Beatus miniatures. Although limited space might indeed have caused the omission of this figure at Ejea de los Caballeros, the same cannot be suggested for the two manuscript scenes, where pictorial space is plentiful. Moreover, in both monumental scenes, Jesus is immersed fairly deeply in the baptismal font so that his figure is covered to either the chest or the hips, whereas in the two manuscripts, the font's edge reaches only to his knees. These variations are accompanied by a corresponding change in the position of John the Baptist, who in the monumental works places his hands on Jesus' breast or shoulder and in the manuscripts lays them on his abdomen and knee. These discrepancies suggest that at least two variant models of the Baptism in a font were already in use when our four examples were produced, and point not to the Gerona Beatus, but to some even earlier, common ancestor whose identity and date must as yet remain unknown.



FIGURE 7. Gerona, Cathedral, sculpted fragment from the Romanesque church (photo: Ampliaciones y Reproducciones Mas [Arxiu Mas]).

### *Formal and Theological Foundations*

The most characteristic features of the Spanish Baptism in a font—the unusually youthful Jesus and the footed baptismal font—have never been accounted for. A logical explanation for the inclusion of a font, which indeed has been suggested with regard to other Baptism examples, would be that it reflects the widespread use of an artificial tub or pool, rather than a natural body of water, in baptismal rites of the period.<sup>35</sup> However, although fonts are known to have been regularly used for baptism in early medieval Spain, archaeological evidence suggests that these were not of the footed type depicted in our Baptism images. Instead, surviving examples take the form of either a sunken basin entered by steps or a simple, footless stone tub.<sup>36</sup> Meanwhile, it must be observed that such contemporary practices seem to have had relatively little effect upon most conventional Spanish Baptism scenes, which utilize the traditional Jordan formula. Indeed, both in Spain and elsewhere, the Jordan type of Baptism remained extraordinarily resistant to such changes, retaining its conventional form for centuries even as scenes depicting the baptism of other persons, such as that of the Frankish king Clovis, did begin to incorporate a contemporary font or basin.<sup>37</sup>

Rather than in a cultural model, the essential ingredients of the Spanish Baptism in a font should instead be sought in a pictorial one. Both the childlike Jesus and the footed font, the most unconventional features of the image, are easily recognized as traditional components of an entirely different Christological scene: the Bath of the Infant Jesus at the Nativity. This subsidiary scene, which may appear either within or adjacent to the Nativity itself, customarily depicts the child Jesus held in or over a tub or footed basin, attended by one or two women.<sup>38</sup> A typical version of the scene in the eleventh-century Catalanian Bible of Ripoll (Bib. Vat., MS. lat. 5729, fol. 366v), for example, offers evident comparison with the Spanish type of the Baptism in a font, most particularly with that at San Juan de la Peña (Figs. 2, 8). In the Ripoll manuscript as in the cloister capital, Jesus is beardless





FIGURE 8. *The Nativity with the Bath of the Infant Christ*, Ripoll Bible, Rome, Vatican Library, ms lat. 5729, det. of fol. 366v (photo: *Ampliaciones y Reproducciones Mas [Arxiú Mas]*).

and cross-nimbed. He sits frontally in a fontlike basin, while an attendant places her hands on the child's breast and shoulder in a position similar to the Baptist's gesture. The other woman, who pours water from an urn into the tub, corresponds closely to the fragmentary water-bearing figure in the San Juan de la Peña scene. Clearly, here is the essential formula on which the Baptism in a font depends.

Depictions of the Bath of Jesus formed a component of medieval Nativity scenes as early as the seventh century.<sup>39</sup> The motif is best known for its frequent appearance in Byzantine Nativities, of which it became a standard component after the period of Iconoclasm; however, it is also well represented in Western art from the ninth century onward.<sup>40</sup> A recent study of the theme by Vincent Juhel reveals that by the twelfth century, approximately one quarter of all Nativity scenes in the West included a depiction of Jesus' Bath.<sup>41</sup> Although no surviving Spanish image of the Bath can be securely dated before the eleventh century, an earlier example of the scene surely must have been known in Spain no later than the tenth century, when it would be reused as a scene of the Baptism.<sup>42</sup>

What, however, could have been the reason for this reuse? It is unlikely to have resulted from a misunderstanding or confusion of the original Bathing motif.<sup>43</sup> Deprived of any external visual or textual clues, an inexperienced artist might conceivably have misinterpreted a scene of Jesus' Bath as a representation of his Baptism. However, it is difficult to imagine how such external clues might have been lacking, since the Bath customarily appears as a component of a larger Nativity scene, and would not have been depicted independently of this context. Instead, it seems very probable that the Bath formula was deliberately borrowed to create a new Baptism scene. The Bath contains all the requisite ingredients of a traditional Baptism: a passive, centralized figure of Jesus, a body of water in which he is immersed, and at least one standing figure who ministers to him. Only minimal changes would be required to convert these elements into a satisfactory Baptism scene. Presuming that the traditional model for a desired Baptism was for some reason not to be used by the artist, the Bath certainly would have offered an attractive substitute.

The pictorial similarities on which this borrowing depends must have been rendered all the more appealing by the evident typological parallels between the episodes of Jesus' Bath and Baptism, which clearly were recognized by early medieval theologians. The earliest patristic writings on baptism often describe it in terms of a ritual washing, and at times refer explicitly to the cleansing properties of the act. The second-century north African author Tertullian, whose tract *De baptismo* is the earliest surviving monograph on the properties and significance of baptism, repeatedly used the nouns *lavacrum* ("bath"), *aqua* (literally, "water-bath"), and the verb *tinguere* ("to wash off" or "immerse") in discussing the ritual.<sup>44</sup> He wrote of baptism as a preparatory cleansing, by which the baptisand is made ready to receive the Holy Spirit.<sup>45</sup> In Spain, a similar conception of baptism as both a literal and metaphorical washing was propounded in the seventh century by the influential Iberian Father, Isidore of Seville, who compared the rite's external cleansing of the body with its purification of the soul.<sup>46</sup>

Coupled with the notion of baptism as a cleansing ritual was the widely held belief in baptism as a spiritual rebirth, an idea rooted directly in Scriptural sources. John 1:12–13 refers obliquely to such rebirth in describing the faithful as "sons of God," born "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." The same association is made more explicitly in John 3:5, when Jesus tells Nicodemus, "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," and in Titus 3:3–7, where "the laver of regeneration and renovation of the Holy Spirit" are described as the means of Christian salvation. On the basis of these Scriptural precedents, the notion of baptism as a new birth or rebirth would become a repeated theme in both Eastern and Western literature.<sup>47</sup>

Most significant to our study is the fact that in some of these writings, the concept of baptism as a new birth is



literally combined with that of the ritual bath, so that baptism is described essentially as the *bathing* of the new-born spirit. So, for example, wrote Tertullian at the end of *De baptismo*:

Therefore, you blessed ones, when you come up from that most sacred washing of the new birth, and when for the first time you spread out your hands with your brethren in your mother's house, ask of your Father, ask of your Lord, that special grants of grace and apportionments of spiritual gifts be yours.<sup>48</sup>

As the offspring, as it were, of the mother church and God the Father, and as the spiritual sibling of other baptisands, the baptized person adopts the role of a new-born child, for whom the baptismal immersion effectively doubles as the natal bath. This interpretation too had some currency among Iberian writers, such as Pacianus, bishop of Barcelona toward the end of the fourth century. In his *Sermo de baptismo*, Pacianus described the faithful as children of Christ, conceived by means of the Holy Spirit in the womb of the church, and “partu fontis exceptum”—“brought forth in the birth of the font.”<sup>49</sup> A related image is evoked in Methodius's fourth-century treatise *Concerning Chastity*, whose interpretation of the Apocalyptic Woman (Rev. 12:1–6) might have been of interest to Spanish writers, given the prominence held by the book of Revelation in Spanish liturgy and exegesis. Methodius explained that the Woman represents the mother church; her labor in childbirth is the continual production of the faithful in the church; and the moon on which she stands is the baptismal font: “Whence she must of necessity stand over the laver of baptism, bringing forth those who are washed in it.”<sup>50</sup>

With regard to the Life of Christ, this typology is somewhat less clearly stated. To begin with, patristic literature contains no explicit comparison of Jesus' Baptism with his Bath. Undoubtedly this is due to the fact that the Bath of Jesus is described by neither Scripture nor Apocrypha before the tenth century.<sup>51</sup> Therefore, the subject seems to have remained of little concern to medieval exegetical writers, who focused instead upon Old Testament prefigurations of the Baptism, such as Moses' crossing of the Red Sea and Noah's passage through the Flood.<sup>52</sup> Patristic interest in the relationship between Jesus' Bath and Baptism might also have been constrained by those aspects of the generic bathing/baptism typology that would have been deemed irrelevant to the Baptism of Jesus, such as the function of baptism as a cleansing away of sins, when Jesus did not require such purification.

Nonetheless, a typological relationship between Jesus' Bath and Baptism does seem to have been recognized, particularly in the early church, which viewed the Nativity and Baptism of Jesus as complementary epiphanies by which both human and divine aspects of Christ's dual nature were

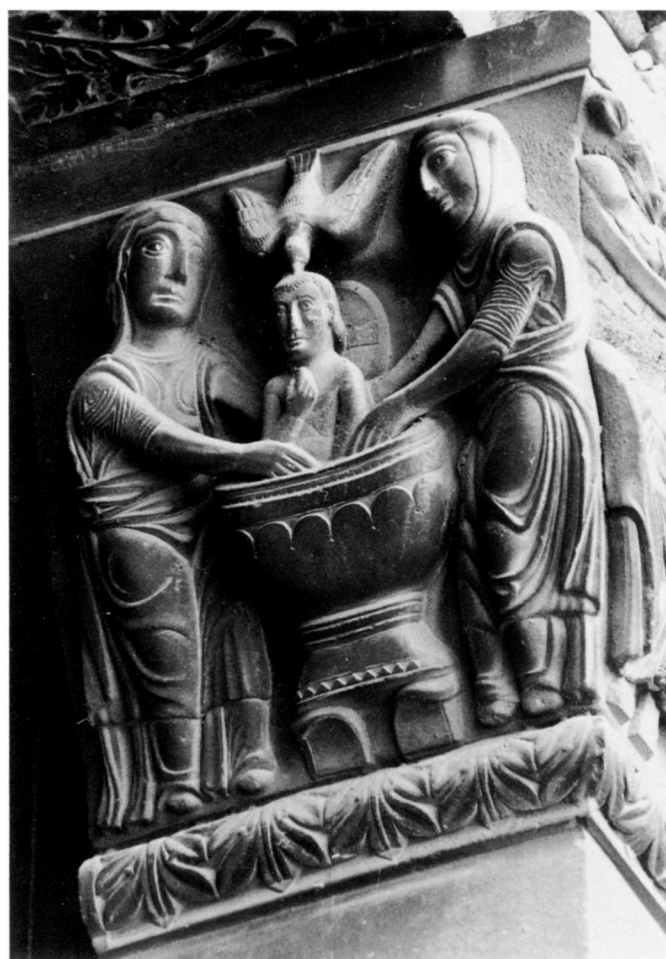


FIGURE 9. Arles, Saint-Trophime, west portal, right corbel below lintel: the Bath of the Infant Christ (photo: Whitney S. Stoddard, by permission).

revealed. The multiple events surrounding the Nativity of Jesus, his first appearance to humanity, emphasize his human nature and prefigure the event of his Baptism, at which his divine nature would be revealed through God's statement, “This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased” (Matthew 3:17; Mark. 1:11; Luke 3:22).<sup>53</sup> This complementary relationship is reflected in the close association of the feasts of the Nativity and Baptism in the early Christian calendar. Until the fourth century, both festivals were celebrated on January 6, often in a single ceremony commemorating the parallel manifestations of Christ made possible by the two events. When, after that date, the feast of the Nativity was relocated by the Western, and eventually also by the Eastern Church to December 25, the January 6 celebration remained focused on the theme of Christ's Epiphany.<sup>54</sup> As such, it sometimes continued to link certain aspects of the Baptism and Nativity. The fifth-century *Conferences* of John Cassian, for example, record that in Egypt the birth and baptism of Jesus were still celebrated together on the Epiphany.<sup>55</sup> A theological poem of contemporary date, written by Paulinus



FIGURE 10. *Ivory plaque with Christological scenes* (photo: British Museum).



FIGURE 11. *The Baptism of Jesus, det. of a sculpted font Bjäresjö (Skåne), Sweden* (photo: Folke Nordström, by permission).

of Nola, links the Baptism with the Adoration of the Magi, a popular portion of the Nativity story, and with the Miracle at Cana as the central events of that day.<sup>56</sup> This typology was especially strong in Spain, as we are told by Isidore of Seville, who listed the Adoration, the Baptism and the Cana Miracle as the three feasts to be celebrated on Epiphany.<sup>57</sup> Thus the Baptism in a font, which associates a scene of Jesus' Baptism with another episode from the Nativity—that of his natal Bath—has a certain liturgical precedent.

Regardless of its exclusion from early exegetical literature, the episode of Jesus' Bath must certainly have been known at a popular level as early as the seventh century, the date of its earliest surviving depictions in art.<sup>58</sup> It seems at that date to have also become established in oral legend, as is illustrated by a seventh-century pilgrim's account which describes in Bethlehem, beside the grotto of the Nativity, the stone tub in which the infant Jesus had been bathed.<sup>59</sup> Thus it may be supposed that the Bath episode must have attained a certain popular currency some centuries prior to its appearance in formal theological writings. At this stage, it also may have appeared in oral homilies or sermons, as Juhel has recently suggested.<sup>60</sup> Indeed, it does not seem impossible that it was a sermon of this very sort in which the typology of Jesus' Bath and Baptism was first directly expressed.<sup>61</sup>

Whatever its original source, the typological relationship between Jesus' Bath and Baptism was soon recognized by artists not only in Spain, but in many parts of Europe. Beginning in the eighth century, a small but significant



assortment of non-Peninsular works can be found which combine the iconography of Bath and Baptism in images similar to the Spanish motif. One of these, which may well be linked with the Spanish tradition, is a late twelfth-century corbel depicting Jesus' Bath, found on the west portal of Saint-Troph  me in Arles (Fig. 9). In this image, whose proximity to the Nativity leaves no question of its identity, the typology of Bath and Baptism has been reversed from the Spanish type: its otherwise traditional depiction of the infant Jesus attended by two midwives is given Baptismal connotations by the inclusion of a dove, which hovers over the infant's head.<sup>62</sup> The inspiration for this particular variant might easily have derived from the Spanish Baptism tradition, since Provence, always tied culturally and ecclesiastically to Catalonia, was ruled by the Aragonese Crown in the second half of the twelfth century.<sup>63</sup>

Meanwhile, other European works which depend upon the Bath/Baptism typology are unrelated in either appearance or provenance to the Spanish Baptism scenes. These include a pair of eighth-century Anglo-Saxon ivories, now in the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Mus  e de Cluny, which include closely comparable Baptism scenes depicting a youthful Jesus seated in a low, tublike font, flanked by John the Baptist and an angel.<sup>64</sup> Possibly related to this pair is a Continental plaque dated *ca.* 900 and now in the British Museum, which depicts a somewhat more elaborate scene of the Baptism. Here, the tub shaped font stands directly in the Jordan river in a manner not unlike that of the Gerona and Turin Baptisms; the hand of God appears above the dove of the Holy Spirit; and the episode is clarified by inscriptions reading "PATERNA VOX" and "BAPTISMUS DOMINI" (Fig. 10).<sup>65</sup> The similarity of this Baptism type to ninth-century images of Jesus' Bath has already been observed by John Beckwith, who, however, chose to dismiss as an artistic error what was surely a deliberate borrowing.<sup>66</sup>

A second, more idiosyncratic type of Baptism scene is found in Sweden, in the relief decoration of three twelfth- to thirteenth-century baptismal fonts at Bj  resj  , Hillared and Grovare.<sup>67</sup> These scenes initially resemble the Spanish examples in that they depict Jesus seated in a footed font. However, they differ in almost every other respect from the Spanish Baptism type. At Bj  resj  , for example, Jesus is shown as a bearded adult, holding a cross-staff; he is flanked by the Virgin as well as by the Baptist; and a star, not a dove, hovers over the scene (Fig. 11).<sup>68</sup> Nonetheless, as with the Spanish and English examples, these scenes are distinguished by their striking resemblance to local contemporary images of Jesus' Bath, a scene which also appears with some frequency on medieval Swedish fonts.<sup>69</sup>

To seek out direct connections among these three iconographic families would be both difficult and misleading. Although they resemble each other in their most unusual feature, the depiction of Jesus baptized in a font, their discrepancies of appearance, date, and provenance suggest that

they developed independently of each other. It is this very independence, however, that confirms the strength of the ideological typology upon which all these works depend. The apparently coincidental emergence, at various times and locations, of three disparate variants based on the same type of iconographic borrowing suggests that the association between Jesus' Bath and Baptism was not limited to a tiny group of Spanish artists, but was recognized and utilized, albeit sporadically, throughout medieval Europe.

The iconographic borrowing that gave rise to the Spanish Baptism in a font thus had a double inspiration. First and foremost, the image was inspired by a pictorial typology: a simple formal similarity between the conventional formula for the Bath of Jesus and the formal requirements of a traditional Baptism scene. In addition, however, its creation was supported by the ideological typologies—both generic and specific, both patristic and popular—that link the two events. In combination, these mutually reinforcing factors would have offered an extremely trustworthy foundation to the experimental artist, who could "invent" a new iconographic formula for the Baptism while remaining firmly based in both artistic and theological tradition.

The specific motivations behind this iconographic invention must for now remain unknown. To begin with, the purpose of the image as it is found earliest, in the Beatus codices of Gerona and Turin, is unclear: to date, neither its unprecedented inclusion in the Beatus cycle nor its placement adjacent to the apparently unrelated *storia* of the Adoration of the Lamb has been satisfactorily explained.<sup>70</sup> The inclusion of a Baptism in the Christological programs of San Juan de la Pe  a and Ejea de los Caballeros is somewhat less mysterious, but these straightforward narrative cycles offer little conceptual framework for the scene's typological implications.<sup>71</sup> A better understanding of the scene's intended function in either of these cases might perhaps offer some explanation for its unconventional form. Uncertain of these circumstances, we are left only to speculate as to the motive of the scene's unknown inventor. The Baptism in a font might be a primarily formal borrowing, created for lack of a more traditional image and with relatively little concern for its ideological implications. Conversely, it might have arisen from an explicit desire to enhance the traditional Baptism formula by making visual reference to the typologically related event of the Bath, and thus to the Nativity.

## Conclusions

As we have seen, the unconventional Baptism scene so recently unearthed at San Juan de la Pe  a is by no means a mere pictorial anomaly. Instead, along with its relatives in Ejea de los Caballeros, Turin and Gerona, it introduces a new, multivalent Baptism motif based on both pictorial and ideological typologies. The creation and dissemination of

this motif in Spain serves as a striking and necessary reminder of the flexibility and innovation with which the medieval artist deserves more often to be credited. Given the opportunity to invent a new formula for the Baptism of Jesus, the creator of the Baptism in a font responded with a motif which met both pictorial and ideological criteria for the scene. This innovation is all the more striking because it occurs in an image of the Baptism, a scene with one of the most consistent iconographic traditions in the history of Christian art. Thus whether impelled by some unexplained exigency or inspired by oral tradition, the motif of the Baptism of Jesus in a font bears witness to both the imagination and the adaptability of an unknown medieval artist.

#### NOTES

- \* I would like to thank Susan von Daum Tholl, whose comments during the writing of my dissertation inspired my research on the present topic. I also thank Eric M. White for his always helpful suggestions and objections, and Whitney S. Stoddard, Folke Nordström, R. Eric Davis, and my Cederberg relatives in Täby and Alnö, Sweden, for their generous assistance in the assembly of my illustrations.
1. For an overview of the history and art of the monastery of San Juan de la Peña, see primarily R. del Arco, *La Covadonga de Aragón. El real monasterio de San Juan de la Peña* (Jaca, 1919) and A. I. Lapeña Paul, *San Juan de la Peña. Guía histórico-artística* (Zaragoza, 1986). Lapeña's recent monograph on the monastery, *El monasterio de San Juan de la Peña (desde sus orígenes hasta 1410)* (Zaragoza, 1989) offers the most complete historical treatment of the site but deliberately avoids discussion of art historical issues. On the San Juan de la Peña cloister and its sculpture, see primarily R. Crozet, "Recherches sur la sculpture romane en Navarre et en Aragon. Sur les traces d'un sculpteur," *CCM*, XI (1968): 41–57; J. Lacoste, "Le maître de San Juan de la Peña," *Cahiers de Saint-Michel de Cuxa*, X (1979), 175–89; and P. Patton, "The Cloister of San Juan de la Peña and Monumental Sculpture in Aragon and Navarre" (Dissertation, Boston University, 1994).
2. The date of the San Juan de la Peña cloister has been a subject of some debate in past literature, but my research has found both documentation and stylistic evidence to support a date in the last quarter of the twelfth century, most likely ca. 1180–90. See Patton, "Cloister," 162–77.
3. Results of the excavations are summarized in Lapeña, *Guía*, 60.
4. Limited discussion of the Baptism capital appears in my dissertation: see Patton, "Cloister," 53–54 and 204–6 (cat. no. 23). However, the broad scope of this study rendered unfeasible a thorough iconographic examination of the Baptism capital. The capital has also been mentioned, though not identified, by Lapeña, *Guía*, 68.
5. The San Juan de la Peña cloister has suffered a great deal of physical damage, primarily as a result of three major fires recorded in 1375, 1494 and 1675. Subsequent attempts to restore the monastery have also altered the cloister's appearance. At this writing, two complete and one partially reconstructed gallery survive. See Patton, "Cloister," 19–23.
6. As a rule, the San Juan de la Peña artist tended to focus individual scenes on the corners and long faces of double capitals, leaving the short sides of the basket to be filled by ancillary figures such as spectators or attendants. Because of this, and because a theoretical reconstruction of the cloister program (see Fig. 3) shows that no additional scenes would have been necessary in this section of the narrative, I believe it probable that the missing faces of the Baptism capital contained only figures pertaining to the two surviving scenes.
7. This identification is confirmed by the existence of a comparable Presentation scene in the north portal archivolt of Ejea de los Caballeros, a monument which, as we shall see below, is closely related in both style and iconography to the San Juan de la Peña cloister. The San Juan de la Peña scene is also mentioned in a late sixteenth- or early seventeenth-century description of the cloister capitals by an architect named Pedro de Peralta. Peralta included a scene he called the "Circuncisión"—an understandable misidentification of the scene—in his list of the cloister's imagery (Madrid, Archivo Histórico Nacional, folder 2445, fol. 8v). See Patton, "Cloister," 54 and 205–6. Peralta's document is discussed and partially transcribed on 20, n. 57.
8. The reconstruction of the cloister depends upon two defining principles: first, that unlike most French and Spanish cloisters before the end of the twelfth century, the San Juan de la Peña cloister was intended to follow a logical narrative sequence, and second, that the cloister maintained a regularly alternating plan, which consisted of iambic single and double supports punctuated by a four-column pier at the center of each gallery. Both of these principles hold true for the west gallery of the cloister, which has survived virtually undisturbed. See Patton, "Cloister," 54–64.
9. The Presentation in the Temple provides a logical end to the Infancy cycle, whereas the Baptism, the event in which Jesus' divine aspect is first made apparent, traditionally opens the cycle of his Ministry.
10. Matthew 3:13–17; Mark. 1:9–11; Luke 3:21–22; John 1:29–34. Matthew and Mark specify the Jordan river as the site at which Jesus' Baptism took place; all four authors describe the descent of the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove.
11. The personification of the Jordan bearing water in an urn, a classical derivation, is frequent in early medieval Baptism scenes, such as that which appears on the fifth-century Werden Casket (see G. Schiller, *Iconography of Christian Art*, trans. J. Seligman [Greenwich, CT, 1971], I, fig. 552), and on the Baptistry of the Arians in Ravenna (F. W. Deichmann, *Frühchristlichen Bauten und Mosaiken von Ravenna* [Baden-Baden, 1958], figs. 252, 254). Such a figure also appears in many Byzantine Baptisms, including the eleventh-century mosaic scene in the Katholikon of Hosios Loukas (P. Lazarides, *The Monastery of Hosios Loukas* [Athens, 1970], pl. 13).
12. It is more rare to see an angel emptying an urn into the water, but one example may be found in a sixth-century fresco of the Baptism in the catacombs of Ponziano in Rome (Schiller, *Iconography*, I, fig. 354).
13. The earliest scenes of the Baptism often depict a youthful, even child-like Jesus, as may be seen a third-century fresco in the catacombs of Pietro e Marcellino in Rome, in a relief from the sixth-century throne of Archbishop Maximian, and in the Werden Casket (Schiller, *Iconography*, I, figs. 347, 361, 352); this type of Jesus becomes rare by the Romanesque period, when he is nearly always depicted as an adult.
14. To date, my own research has uncovered only eleven medieval examples of Jesus baptized in a tub or font, all of which are either discussed or cited in this article, 81–82, 88.
15. The Crown of Aragon was formed in 1137 by the marriage of Ramón Berenguer IV, count of Barcelona, with Petronilla, daughter and sole heiress of Ramiro II, king of Aragon. In the second half of the twelfth century, it encompassed an area which extended westward to the traditional Navarrese border, southward to well beyond the Ebro basin, and northward over the Pyrenees to include Provence. See T. N. Bisson, *The Medieval Crown of Aragon* (New York, 1986), 31–57.
16. San Salvador in Ejea de los Caballeros has not, at this writing, been treated monographically, but it is usually discussed within the context



- of more general publications. See, e.g., A. Canellas López and A. San Vicente Pino, *Aragón* (series "España románica," 4; Madrid, 1979), 446–48. For a state of the literature and a brief discussion of chronology, style and iconography, see Patton, "Cloister," 139–43 and 218–19.
15. See especially A. K. Porter, *Spanish Romanesque Sculpture* (Florence, 1928), 29–31; Crozet, "Recherches," 41–57; and Lacoste, "Le Maître," 175–89. All of these authors attribute a large body of monumental sculpture in Aragon and Navarre to the "Master of San Juan de la Peña." My own research regarding the "Master" indicates that the traditional oeuvre is too disparate, chronologically and stylistically, to be ascribed entirely to a single artist but must be attributed instead to a small group of artisans working in a consistent local style. Thus, the portals of Ejea de los Caballeros, which may have been sculpted as many as twenty years later than the cloister, should be attributed to a closely related associate of the cloister sculptor, possibly a pupil. See Patton, "Cloister," 119–61, especially 139–43.
  16. Patton, "Cloister," 139–43 and 183–221.
  17. The Turin Beatus is known in some literature by its prior reference number, "MS. lat. 93." Although the manuscript does not carry an inscribed date, paleographic and stylistic evidence support a date in the early to mid-twelfth century for its production. Its ascription to a scriptorium in Gerona is based on its evident dependence upon the tenth-century Beatus of Gerona. See C. Cid and I. Vigil, "El Beato de la Biblioteca Nacional de Turín, copia románica catalana del Beato mozárabe leonés de la catedral de Gerona," *Anales del Instituto de Estudios Gerundenses*, XVII (1964–65), 168 and 172–74. Also on the Turin Beatus, see W. Neuss, *Die Apokalypse des Hl. Johannes in der altspanischen und altchristlichen Bibel-Illustration*, 2 vols. (Münster, 1931), I, 41–45; and J. Ainaud, *El arte románico. Catálogo de la exposición del Consejo de Europa celebrada en Barcelona y Santiago de Compostela* (Barcelona and Santiago, 1961), 69.
  18. The *Commentary on the Apocalypse* was written in the last quarter of the eighth century by Beatus of Liébana, an Asturian monk best known for his writings opposing the Adoptionist heresy in Spain. About two dozen illustrated copies of the *Commentary* survive from the tenth through thirteenth centuries. The book consists of excerpted passages, or *storiae*, from the book of Revelation, each followed by a commentary, or *explanatio*, to which additional textual material, usually genealogical tables and Jerome's *Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, was often appended. The pictorial cycle that accompanies medieval copies of the *Commentary* generally illustrates the Scriptural passages, rather than the commentaries themselves. The cycle is believed by some authors to have been attached to the written text within Beatus' lifetime but apparently did not attain its final form until the tenth century. For general works on the Beatus see Neuss, *Apokalypse*; A. M. Mundó and M. Sánchez Mariana, *El Comentario de Beato al Apocalipsis. Catálogo de los códices* (Madrid, 1976); P. Klein, *Der ältere Beatus-Kodex Vitr. 14-1 der Biblioteca Nacional zu Madrid. Studien zur Beatus-Illustration und der spanischen Buchmalerei des 10. Jahrhunderts* (Hildesheim, 1976); J. Williams, *Early Spanish Manuscript Illumination* (New York, 1977), 24–28; and Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, *Los Beatos* (Madrid, 1986), L. Revenga, ed. The forthcoming catalogue of Beatus codices by John Williams is soon to offer a valuable new resource in this field.
  19. "And I beheld, and lo, a lamb stood upon Mount Sion, and with him a hundred and forty-four thousand having his name and the name of his Father written on their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven as the noise of many waters and as the voice of great thunder; the voice which I heard was as the sound of harpers harping on their harps, and they sung as it were a new canticle before the throne and before the four living creatures and before the ancients. And no one could say the canticle but those hundred and forty-four thousand who were purchased from the earth. These are they who were not defiled with women: for they are virgins. These follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were purchased from among men as the first fruits to God and to the Lamb, and in their mouth there was found no lie, for they are without spot before the throne of God."
  20. Cid and Vigil, "Copia," 274.
  21. The Y-shaped contours of the Jordan might possibly have appeared in the area immediately surrounding the font, where the sculpted surface has been destroyed. The mound of earth on which John the Baptist stands in the Turin version could also have appeared to the left of the font. The existence of inscriptions on the capital is less likely, since no textual material appears on any of the surviving San Juan de la Peña capitals.
  22. Bisson, *Medieval Crown*, 27.
  23. Bisson, *Medieval Crown*, 46–48. Numerous later twelfth-century documents from San Juan de la Peña include the names of Catalanian clerics, who seem to have been called upon frequently to oversee the settlement of local territorial disputes. In 1153, for example, the bishop of Tarragona joined the bishop of Zaragoza to aid in a dispute with the see of Pamplona over territory in Luna and Tauste; in 1157, the same dignitary was part of a delegation brought to the monastery for support in resolving the severe economic crisis which it suffered in that year. See P. Kehr, "Papsturkunden in Navarra und Aragón. I," *Abhandlung der Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen (Neue Folge)*, XXII (1928), docs. 67 and 84.
  24. On the Gerona Beatus, see especially Neuss, *Apokalypse*, 21–25; Cid and Vigil, "Las miniaturas que faltan en el 'Beato' de Gerona," *Revista de Gerona*, VIII (1962), 42–58; *idem*, "Copia," 163–329; and *Beati in Apocalipsin libri duodecim. Codex Gerundensis*, facsimile with transcription by H. A. Sanders and commentaries by J. Camón Aznar, T. Marín Martínez, and J. Marqués Casanovas (Madrid, 1975).
  25. Textual additions written in eleventh-century Catalan script confirm this. See J. Marqués, "The Beato of Gerona," in *Beati*, 233; Cid and Vigil, "Copia," 167–68.
  26. Cid and Vigil, "Copia," 163–329, esp. 172–80.
  27. The Turin codex also preserves intact numerous textual errors and additions otherwise unique to the Gerona codex, including the freehand corrections and Leonine verses that were added to the manuscript upon its arrival at Gerona cathedral in the late eleventh century. A few iconographic discrepancies do exist between the works, some of which may be ascribed to losses. Cid and Vigil have attributed other differences to deliberate adaptations made by the second scriptorium in response to changes in scriptural and artistic style, noting especially changes in the space accorded to textual versus pictorial material, related to the use of Catalan, rather than Mozarabic script, and simplifications or "corrections" made by the Romanesque artist in keeping with current stylistic trends. See Cid and Vigil, "Copia," 172–80.
  28. Scenes of Christ's Life are extremely rare in the Beatus tradition; often, they are limited to a single image of the Virgin and Child, which appears at the end of the genealogical tables. Neuss has identified only five Beatus codices containing scenes from the Life of Christ, none of which predate the Gerona Beatus. These include an eleventh-century copy from Saint-Sever (Paris, Bib. Nat. MS. lat. 8878), which depicts the Adoration of the Magi and the Annunciation to the Shepherds (fol. 12v); a late twelfth- to early thirteenth-century codex in Manchester (John Rylands Library, MS. 8), which depicts the Adoration of the Magi (fol. 13); and a thirteenth-century copy from Las Huelgas, now in New York (Morgan Library, ms. 429), which also includes the Adoration (fol. 12). See Neuss, *Apokalypse*, 125–33.

- In contrast, the Gerona and Turin codices contain numerous Christological illustrations. Fols. 15–17 of the Gerona manuscript depict the Annunciation, the Nativity, the Adoration of the Magi, the Persecution of Herod, Herod's Illness, the Denial of Peter, the Crucifixion, the Resurrection and Appearance to the Holy Women, the Suicide of Judas, and the Descent into Limbo. The Turin copy contains (fols. 14v–15r) the Annunciation, the Nativity, the Adoration of the Magi, the Persecution of Herod, Herod's Illness, Jesus washing the Disciples' Feet, Jesus telling Peter of the Betrayal, the Last Supper, and the Arrest of Christ. The Crucifixion appears on fol. 2, apparently displaced from this series. The present lack of correlation between the cycles of the two manuscripts may be due in part to missing folios and changes during restoration. See Cid and Vigil, "Copia," 183–85.
29. "UBI XPS ET JOHANNES IN JORDONE FLUMINE TINCTUS FUE-RUNT." The grammatically incorrect "tinctus" was corrected to "tincti" in the Turin manuscript.
  30. The colophon appears on fol. 284; it has been translated by J. Marqués as follows: "Senior the presbyter wrote [it]. Dominicus the abbot ordered [this] book to be made. Ende [or En], painter and handmaid of God; Emeterius, brother and presbyter. I happily finished the volume on Tuesday, the sixth of July; in those days Fernando Fláginiz de [las] Villas, a town of Toledo, was fighting the Moors. The year nine hundred and seventy-five was running its course." See Marqués, "Beato," 224–25.
  31. Both Emeterius and Senior are identified in the colophon of this manuscript (fols. 167–167v), dated A.D. 970, which now is found in the Archivo Histórico Nacional in Madrid (cod. 1097B). See Marqués, "Beato," 225–30. It is unfortunate that most of the illustrations have been lost from the Tábara manuscript, which might otherwise have shed a good deal of light on the character of the Gerona illuminations.  
Nothing further is known about the woman painter identified in the colophon as either "Ende pintrix" or "En depintrix"; her identification as a "handmaid of God" ("auitrix dei") suggests that she was a nun, which seems all the more likely in view of her collaboration with the monks Senior and Emeterius. It is interesting that Ende's name precedes that of Emeterius in the colophon, and that she is the only participant specifically identified as a painter. This may suggest that hers was the primary responsibility for the illuminations.
  32. Cid and Vigil, "Copia," 167.
  33. J. Marqués, "Importantes hallazgos arqueológicos en la catedral de Gerona," *Revista de Gerona*, VI/14 (1961), 39–44. See also *idem*, "Proyección del Beato de Gerona en el arte," *Revista de Gerona*, XXII/73 (1975), 24–31, as well as the useful overview by X. Barral i Altet, "Repercusión de la ilustración de los Beatos en la iconografía del arte monumental románico," in *Actas del Simposio para el Estudio de los Códices del Comentario al Apocalipsis de Beato de Liébana*, 3 vols. (Madrid, 1978), II, 35–54 *passim*.
  34. Marqués, "Hallazgos," 41–42 and figs. 3, 4, and 5.
  35. J. Strzygowski, *Iconographie der Taufe Christi* (Munich, 1885), 36–37. Strzygowski suggested this in the case of two ivory reliefs showing the Baptism of Jesus in a tublike font; F. Nordström has offered a similar explanation with regard to a group of Swedish Baptism scenes, in which she believes the baptismal font to be a symbol for the Jordan River. F. Nordström, *Mediaeval Baptismal Fonts: an Iconographical Study* (Stockholm, 1984), 100. Both of these groups will be discussed briefly below.
  36. The sunken type can be found at several fifth- to seventh-century sites, including Vega del Mar, near San Pedro de Alcántara (Málaga), and the rural church of San Pedro, near Mérida. An example of a round tublike font, dating probably from the eleventh century, survives at Wamba, near Valladolid. See T. C. Akeley, *Christian Initiation in Spain* (London, 1967), 54–55 and figs. 1–4. To these examples also could be added the eleventh-century square stone font at San Isidoro in León, whose relief decoration includes a scene of Christ baptized in the Jordan.
  37. Early medieval examples include an ivory plaque of the ninth to tenth centuries, which depicts Peter using a tublike font for baptism, and a tenth-century ivory plaque with scenes from the life of Remigius, now in Amiens, which depicts the baptism of Clovis in a quatrefoil font (A. Goldschmidt, *Die Elfenbeinskulpturen aus der Zeit der Karolingischen und Sächsischen Kaiser, VIII–XI Jahrhundert* [Berlin, 1914], I, cat. nos. 57 and 108). Strzygowski observed a similar baptism scene in the ninth-century *paliotto* of Sant'Ambrogio in Milan (*Ikongraphie* 36, Pl. VIII, Figs. 4 and 7). In Spain, the coexistence of the traditional Jordan Baptism with other scenes of baptism in a font is nowhere more clear than in the late twelfth-century cloister of San Pedro el Viejo in Huesca, not far from San Juan de la Peña. This cloister, also a product of the San Juan de la Peña atelier, contains both a traditional Jordan Baptism of Jesus and two scenes of contemporary baptisms in a font (see, e.g., Canellas and San Vicente, *Aragón*, Fig. 124).
  38. See the recent study of this theme by Vincent Juhel, "Le bain de l'Enfant-Jésus des origines à la fin du douzième siècle," *CA*, XXXIX (1991), 111–32.
  39. The earliest western examples cited by Juhel include a seventh- to eighth-century ivory plaque of the Nativity, now in the University Museum of Bologna; a fresco in the catacombs of San Valentino in Rome, and a mosaic in the oratory of John VII in Rome (Juhel, "Le bain," 111–15).
  40. The Bath appears, for example, in the Utrecht Psalter (fol. 50v) and the Sacramentary of Drogo (Paris, Bib. nat. MS. lat. 9428; fol. 24v). See Juhel, "Le bain," 118–20.
  41. Juhel, "Le bain," 111.
  42. The earliest Spanish scenes of the Bath of Jesus of which I am aware date no earlier than the eleventh century; these include the Ripoll Bible image noted above and two frescoes in the Catalan churches of San Pedro de Sorpe and Santa María de Barberá (Juhel, "Le bain," Figs. 20, 29). However, ninth- and tenth-century contacts between French and Spanish monasteries, which at this date were increasing, may well have furnished a manuscript model upon which the Baptism image could be based.
  43. Such a misreading has been suggested by J. Beckwith with regard to two eighth-century Anglo-Saxon ivories, which will be discussed briefly below. See Beckwith, *Ivory Carvings in Early Medieval England* (London, 1972), 23–24.
  44. B. Nennhauser, *Baptism and Confirmation*, trans. J. J. Hughes (Freiburg, 1964), 85. Nennhauser traced the etymology of the Biblical word for baptism to roots meaning "to dip" or "to submerge," 5–6. See also E. Evans, ed. and trans., *Tertullian's Homily on Baptism* (London, 1964), 1–43.
  45. "Non quod in aqua spiritum sanctum consequimur, sed in aqua emundati sub angelo spiritui sancto praeparatur." Tertullian, *De baptismo*, VI; see Evans, *Tertullian's Homily*, 14.
  46. "Nam sicut aqua purgatur exterius corpus, ita latenter eius mysterio per Spiritum sanctum purificatur et animus. Cuius sanctificatio ita est." Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae* VI, 19, 48. For Isidore, we approach baptism "filthy with the ugliness of sin," to be made pure by the baptismal waters: "Prius enim foedi eramus deformitate peccatorum, in ipsa tinctione reddimur pulchri dealbatione virtutum . . ." *Etymologiae* VI, 19, 44. See J. Oroz Ret and M.-A. Marcos Casquero, *San Isidoro de Sevilla, Etimologías. Edición bilingüe*, 2 vols. (Madrid, 1982), 617.
  47. See Nennhauser, *Baptism and Confirmation*, 31–37 and 78–80; W. M. Bedard, *The Symbolism of the Baptismal Font in Early Christian*



- Thought*, The Catholic University of America Studies in Sacred Theology, 2d. ser., no. 45 (Washington, D.C., 1951), 17–36; and J. Daniélou, *Liturgie und Bibel* (Munich, 1963), 54.
48. “Igitur benedicti, quos gratia dei expectat, cum de illo sanctissimo lavacro novi natalis ascenditis et primas manus apud matrem cum fratribus apertis, petite de padre, petite de domino, peculia gratiae, distributiones charismatum subiacere.” Tertullian, *De baptismo* XX; see Evans, *Tertullian's Homily*, 42.
  49. “. . . Christus et Ecclesia. Ex his nuptiis Christiana plebs nascitur, veniente desuper Spiritu Domini; nostrarumque animarum substantiae, superfuso et admixto proutinus semente coelesti, visceribus matris inolescimus, alvoque eius effusi vivificamur in Christo. Unde Apostolus: Primus Adam, in animam viventem: novissimus Adam, in spiritum vivificantem. Sic generat Christus in Ecclesia per suos sacerdotes, ut idem Apostolus: Christo autem ego vos genui. Atque ita Christi semen, id est Dei Spiritus, novum hominem alvo matris agitat, et partu fontis exceptum, manibus sacerdotis offundit, fide tamen pronuba.” Pacianus, *Sermo de baptismo* VII; quoted in Bedard, *The Symbolism of the Baptismal Font*, 34, n. 61.
  50. Methodius, *On Chastity, or The Banquet of the Ten Virgins*, VIII, 4–7; quoted in Bedard, *The Symbolism of the Baptismal Font*, 19.
  51. See R. Frauenfelder, *Die Geburt des Herrn* (Leipzig, 1939), 21, n. 5.
  52. See Daniélou, *Liturgie und Bibel*, 27–117; and P. Lundberg, *La typologie baptismale dans l'ancienne église* (Leipzig, 1942).
  53. W. Felicetti-Liebenfels, *Geschichte der byzantinischen Ikonenmalerei* (Olten-Lausanne, 1956), 98. Some writers took God's statement at the Baptism to emphasize Jesus' divine paternity, since it echoes Psalm 2:7, “Thou art my son; this day I have begotten thee.” See F. Dolger, “Sol Salutis,” in *Liturgiegeschichtliche Forschungen*, IV/5 (1925), 351.
  54. See A. A. McArthur, *The Evolution of the Christian Year* (London, 1953), 31–76; and P. G. Cobb, “The History of the Christian Year,” in *The Study of Liturgy*, C. Jones, ed., 3d. ed. rev. (London, 1992), 466–68.
  55. McArthur, *Evolution of the Christian Year*, 46.
  56. Cobb, “History of the Christian Year,” 48. See also *The Poems of Paulinus of Nola*, trans. and ed. P. G. Walsh (New York, 1975), 271–72.
  57. McArthur, *Evolution of the Christian Year*, 45.
  58. See Juhel, “Le bain,” 111–15.
  59. See G. Ristow, *Die Geburt Christi in der frühchristlichen und byzantinischen-ostkirchlichen Kunst* (Recklinghausen, 1963), 34 and n. 81.
  60. Juhel, “Le bain,” 130.
  61. My own examination of Western sermons from the ninth to twelfth centuries has not uncovered a text which directly addresses the typology of Jesus' Bath and Baptism. However, it remains possible that more intensive and specialized study of such texts, especially those relating to the feasts of the Christian calendar, may yet reveal an explicit acknowledgement of this relationship.
  62. Juhel also noted the typological implications of this scene, although he did not explore their sources, “Le bain,” 128–30.
  63. Provence was held by Alfonso II of Aragon from 1162 until that monarch's death in 1196. Bisson, *Medieval Crown*, 34–38.
  64. The Victoria and Albert relief, clearly a portion of a once-larger leaf, depicts the Baptism below a fragmentary scene of the Ascension of Christ. Both scenes appear in their entirety in the Cluny relief, which, however, is so badly abraded that mere silhouettes of the figures survive. See Beckwith, *Ivory Carvings*, 24, Figs. 18–20, and J.-P. Caillet, *L'antiquité classique, le haut moyen âge et Byzance au musée de Cluny* (Paris, 1985), 128–32.
  65. Goldschmidt, *Elfenbeinskulpturen*, I, cat. no. 159.
  66. Beckwith, *Ivory Carvings*, 24. In all three ivories, the Baptism appears as an independent scene, not adjacent to a Nativity scene, as would be expected if the image had originated as a Bath scene. Undoubtedly also related to this group of ivories is a stone font from the parish church of West Haddon, England, which depicts Christ standing in a square, tub-like font flanked by John the Baptist, who holds a book, and an angel holding a tunic. No dove is shown. F. Bond, *Fonts and Font Covers* (London, 1908), Fig. 158.
  67. Nordström, *Mediaeval Baptismal Fonts*, 98–101.
  68. An inscription in the arcade surrounding the figures, which is oriented so that it appears upside-down in relation to the Baptism scene, reads: “IOHANNES+TOBIESES+MARIA:FRUA.” Nordström, *Mediaeval Baptismal Fonts*, 98.
  69. This has been observed by Nordström, who supposed that the Bath scenes had been created in imitation of Baptism iconography, an essential reverse of the hypothesis suggested here (*Mediaeval Baptismal Fonts*, 101–2, Fig. 60).
  70. This placement separates the Baptism from any other scenes of Christ's life, which appear in series toward the beginning of the Gerona codex, following the genealogical tables (fols. 15–17). Apart from certain references to chastity and spotlessness, which might in a general sense be associated with the purification of sins during baptism, the Adoration *storia* is in no way related to the Baptism of Jesus. Furthermore, because a more appropriate illustration of the Adoration passage, a double-page depiction of the Adoration of the Lamb on Mount Zion, appears on the folios immediately following the Baptism scene, there would seem to be no further need to illustrate the passage.  
To date, certain non-textual hypotheses have been offered to explain the scene's placement within the cycle. Neuss suggested that the scene might have arisen as a mistake on the part of the copyist, who converted a figure of John the Evangelist in the adjacent Adoration of the Lamb scene into an independent image of John the Baptist (*Apokalypse*, 190). Such a mistake would seem unlikely in this case, since Ende and Emeterius, the artists of the Gerona manuscript, were both members of monastic communities and likely too literate to fall prey to such a fundamental error. Even assuming that the figure's identity had become confused before its appearance in the Gerona Beatus, it is difficult to fathom such an imaginative leap from a single Evangelist figure to a full-fledged Baptism scene. Alternatively, Cid and Vigil have proposed that the Baptism scene might have been adopted by the artist to fill the blank recto page left by the scribe between the end of the *storia* and the double-page Adoration scene that appears on the next opening (“Copia,” 272–73). Although this suggestion is logical, it still does not explain why the Baptism specifically was selected to fill this empty space.  
A third possibility is that the Baptism scene originally belonged to the Christological series appearing at the beginning of the Gerona Beatus, but was relocated either deliberately or through a planning error. Once made, this change would have become a permanent feature of the cycle, later to be repeated in the Turin copy of the work. However, because the original model for the Christological series of the Gerona Beatus remains unknown, this hypothesis too is difficult to substantiate.
  71. The fact that the traditional Jordan Baptism is retained in other cycles which are iconographically related to that of San Juan de la Peña, such as that at San Pedro el Viejo in Huesca (see n. 36, above), only underscores this mystery.